



Student Services

Procedure for Individual Exams Arrangements

Issued by the Quality Transformation Unit

Approved by Senate: n/a

Technical updates of this document take place on an annual basis to reflect changes to the University of Greater Manchester's organisational and management structure and to incorporate earlier, approved amendments to related policies, procedures and regulations.

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Introduction

The Equality Act (2010) defines a disability as: a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on a person's ability to do normal daily activities.

This can include conditions such as Specific Learning Difficulties, Mental Health Conditions, Social and Communication Impairments, Longstanding Illnesses and Physical Impairments.

It is unlawful to discriminate against a disabled person in relation to the provision of education and related services. However, it is lawful to treat a disabled person more favourably because of their disability.

Reasonable adjustments should not compromise the academic standards of programmes or modules. A competence standard is 'an academic, medical, or other standard, applied for the purpose of determining whether a person has a particular level of competence or ability'. A competence standard must apply equally to all students, be genuinely relevant to the programme, and be a proportionate means to achieving a legitimate aim.

The University of Greater Manchester is committed to the promotion of equality, diversity and a supportive environment for all members of our community. Our commitment to equality and diversity means that this procedure has been screened in relation to the use of plain English, the promotion of the positive duty in relation to race, gender and disability and avoidance of discrimination to other equality groups related to age, sexual orientation, religion or belief or gender assignment.

Disability Disclosure

It is a student's responsibility to disclose their disability if they require reasonable adjustments. Disclosure will not prejudice any application to the University. Applicants/Students can disclose their disability in the following ways:

- Application to the university
- Informing any staff member of University of Greater Manchester
- Contacting the Disability Service / Life Lounge for Mental Health condition directly
- Using the online referral form: <https://form.jotformeu.com/81642345625356>

Once the student has disclosed, they will receive an email from the relevant Service (Disability Service or Life Lounge) asking them to book an appointment. It is then the student's responsibility to arrange an appointment with a Disability Advisor or Mental Health Advisor to discuss reasonable adjustments:

- Disability Service: 01204 903478 / disabilityinfo@greatermanchester.ac.uk.
- Life Lounge: 01204 903566 / Lifelounge@greatermanchester.ac.uk

Documentation Required to Receive Reasonable Adjustments

Medical evidence: To ensure the Equality Act (2010) is being followed, medical evidence of a diagnosed disability is required before reasonable adjustments can be put in place. Examples of medical evidence include:

- Full Educational Psychologist's report
- Letter written by a medical professional such as a G.P. The letter needs to include disability diagnosis, confirm it is long term and how the disability impacts the student.

- Educational Health Care Plan that states diagnosis and impact of disability

Consent form: To put in place reasonable adjustments, the Disability Service would need to speak to other staff members in other departments such as academic staff and/or Senior Administration Manager. Information is only shared on a need-to-know basis. Students will be sent a consent form once they have booked in with an Advisor to complete and return to disabilityinfo@greatermanchester.ac.uk.

Disabled Students Allowance needs assessment: If a student is eligible for Disabled Students Allowance, they will have a needs assessment as part of the process to discuss reasonable adjustments they would require. This can include discussions of exam adjustments. Any exam adjustments agreed with the need's assessor will not be automatically implemented and the student would still need to discuss their needs to a Disability Advisor or Mental Health Advisor.

Students are recommended to send their needs assessment report to the Disability Service or Life Lounge if they have not given consent for the needs assessor to send the Disability Service a copy. This report is to show their difficulties and needs assessor's recommendations if there are any. In some circumstances, the Disability or Mental Health Advisor may judge that the arrangements requested by the student or contained in the needs assessment fall outside of what is considered a reasonable adjustment or could impact their course competencies. In this case, the recommended arrangements will not be agreed and put in place.

Panel Request consent form: If applicable, the student will be sent a panel request consent form after their advisors meeting if their exam reasonable adjustments involve a cost such as reader / scribe. Student will be provided information verbally and/or written about this process.

Process of Implementing Exam Adjustments

In-class assessments: Once the arrangements are agreed in the advisor appointment, and a consent form has been completed indicating information can be shared with University Staff on a need-to-know basis, the advisor will send a draft notification of support needs to the student to review. The student has five working days to inform the advisor if this document requires changes. After the five working days the notification of support will be uploaded for academic tutors to see to allow them to implement in-class assessment adjustments. It is advisory for disabled students to keep a copy of their notification to share with tutors in advance of their assessment to check their exam adjustments have been implemented. Students should be aware that tutors cannot access their notifications when working from home.

Formal examinations: Once the arrangements are agreed in the advisor appointment, and a consent form has been completed indicating information can be shared with University Staff on a need-to-know basis, the advisor will update your record so that the Senior Administration Manager can see what adjustments are required. The Senior Administration Manager will email a student prior to their exam to confirm the exam adjustments that are being put in place and will advise them to contact the Disability Service if they do not meet their needs. The Senior Administration Manager will liaise with the academic department to let them know what adjustments are needed.

For some courses such as nursing, the Academic Department will take responsibility for formal examinations and will use notifications to check reasonable adjustments and implement them.

Students should receive a confirmation email of any arrangements made, in advance of their exam. If they do not receive this the students should check with their academic department that their exam adjustments are in place.

Should a student feel their agreed reasonable adjustments do not meet their needs, it is the student's responsibility to contact their advisor a minimum of **4 weeks prior to their exam date to discuss**. Academic tutors and the Senior Administration Manager cannot implement reasonable adjustments that have not yet been discussed and agreed with a Disability or Mental Health Advisor.

Time Frame

Students are advised to disclose their disability and to arrange their appointment with a Disability Advisor or Mental Health Advisor at the earliest stage. This is to guarantee that reasonable adjustments are in place prior to their course start date. Reasonable adjustments can take time to be put in place. As a result, exams arrangements that are not agreed **at least 4 weeks prior** to the examination may not be implemented. Where possible some reasonable adjustments may be able to be implemented with less notice but this is not guaranteed.

Arrangements for subsequent exams on the same course should automatically roll over.

Mitigating circumstances: In some circumstances it may not be possible to put exam arrangements in place in time for exams. An example is when a student is assessed for a Specific Learning Difficulty, such as dyslexia very shortly before the examination. The student must still attend the examination even if it has not been possible to put arrangements in place. Students can then fill in mitigating circumstances after the examination if they feel it is necessary.

Panel Process for University Funded Exam Adjustments

Students who may need to use an examination support worker must discuss this provision during their advisor appointment. If the advisor considers that an examination support worker is required, they will make a request for this support via the internal peer panel or manager's panel. An advisor cannot make the decision on their own that an examination support worker is required. If the panel members agree, it is required the advisor will seek an external supplier who can provide the examination support worker for their initial exam. For future exams, the Senior Administration Manager will contact the supplier to arrange the support. To guarantee that reasonable adjustments are continued for all exams, it is recommended that the student's keeps their advisor informed of any upcoming exams to guarantee an examination support worker will be present at all of their exams. These reasonable adjustments can take time to be agreed and implemented, the student has to ensure they have spoken to an advisor well in advance of their exam to guarantee there is enough time to get a panel request and a supplier to provide the support.

Often a reader will be replaced by use of technology. The student will listen to the questions through reading software on a laptop such as read and write, an iPod or similar device using headphones.

Often a scribe will be replaced by use of technology. This could be with speech to text software such as Dragon on a laptop. Students using this software will have to be placed in an individual room.

Software Setup and Training Requirements for Examinations

Students who are eligible for Disabled Students Allowance who receive software will likely be provided software training. It is the student's responsibility to access the training to ensure they are confident enough to use software in their examinations.

Students who are not eligible for Disabled Students Allowance can request to loan a laptop with software prior to their exam to build their confidence in using software before their examinations. If the student requires an introduction to the software, they have the responsibility to contact Dave Percival on 01204 903173 or d.a.percival@greatermanchester.ac.uk.

Some software such as Dragon can require time to be set up prior to the exam to allow the software to meet the student's needs. Dave Percival may require you to come in before the exam to allow him to set this up. It is a student's responsibility to attend any software set up or training offered.

Disagreements with Individual Exam Arrangements

The University has a duty to make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of disabled students. This duty includes making reasonable adjustments to examination conditions or arrangements to ensure that disabled students are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to students who do not have a disability. However, the University must also ensure that adjustments do not advantage one student over another. It is the role of the Disability or Mental Health Advisors to determine what is considered a reasonable adjustment and the final decision regarding adjustments for exams lies with the Disability Service.

If a student disagrees with the decision, they should carry out the following actions:

- Discuss their concerns with the Advisor.
- If a student remains dissatisfied with the conclusion of this discussion, they may refer their case to the Disability Service Manager. The student must do this in writing explaining the reasons they feel individual exam arrangements should be made and enclose documentary evidence to support their appeal. This must be done in a timely manner to allow the Disability Service Manager to review the case **before** exams commence.
- If the student remains dissatisfied with the way their appeal has been handled, they should now follow the University's Student Complaints Procedure.

Helpful Contacts & Resources

| Support Area | Contact or Link |
|--------------------|---|
| Disability Service | disabilityinfo@greatermanchester.ac.uk 01204903478 |
| Life Lounge | lifelounge@greatermanchester.ac.uk 01204903566 |
| Dignity at Study | dignityatstudy@greatermanchester.ac.uk |

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